

Submitter: Kristy Athens

On Behalf Of: GWC Provisions

Committee: House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water

Measure: HB2998

House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water  
Oregon State Capitol  
900 Court Street NE  
Salem, Oregon 97301

13 February 2023

Chair Helm, Vice-Chairs Hartman and Owens and members of the Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water:

I am writing on behalf of Genuine Wallowa County LLC dba GWC Provisions in strong support of HB 2998, the Healthy Soils Bill which would leverage existing programs and expand resources to support farmers and ranchers with soil health practices that make the most sense for their land and businesses.

I run a food hub in Wallowa County. My business depends on local farmers and ranchers who use sustainable practices to provide my customers healthy, high-quality food. The Soil Health Initiative will provide farmer to farmer education, equipment and financial incentives to farmers and ranchers who want to improve their soil health and are seeking support.

The Healthy Soils Bill provides capacity for existing trusted farm service providers and creates a streamlined process for producers to access the support they want.

Managing for soil health allows producers to work with the land to reduce erosion, maximize water infiltration, improve nutrient cycling, save money on inputs, improve plant health, and ultimately improve the resiliency of their working land. Better soil helps raise better crops. What's good for the land is good for producers.

And improving soil health provides environmental benefits that serve the whole community, including improved water quality, increased biodiversity and pollinator habitat, and sequestered carbon.

The Healthy Soils Bill will support, coordinate, and celebrate the work that many farmers and ranchers are doing to advance soil health. It will also position Oregon to receive federal funding to take this work even further.

Please support and do all you can to advance HB 2998.  
Thank you for your consideration and your service.

Kristy Athens  
Genuine Wallowa County  
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